SNake bites a concern as weather warms up

Warmer weather coaxes snakes out of hiding, and it’s important to know what to do after a snake bite, according to a medical toxicologist at Baylor College of Medicine (www bcm edu).

“Many people don’t realize how much of an issue snake bites are in this area of the country,” said Dr. Spencer Greene, director of medical toxicology and assistant professor of medicine – emergency medicine at BCM. “In fact, our regional poison center reported 235 snake bites – including 148 from known venomous snakes - in the Houston area in 2012, and I am sure many more are going unreported”.

According to Greene, the first step is avoidance.

“Never reach into a hole or a bush blindly, a snake may be resting there,” he said. “It is also important to maintain an appropriate distance from a snake. Most pit vipers, which include rattlesnakes, copperheads and water moccasins, can strike at a target up to two-thirds of their body length when provoked.”

If you are bitten by a snake, Greene suggests the following important steps:
• Stay calm.
• Call 911 immediately to be evaluated.
• Take off anything that is constricting the affected area, such as a ring or watch.
• Position the affected area at or above heart level. This means that if you are bitten on the hand, bring it to heart level, and if you’re bitten on the leg or foot, elevate it if possible. This minimizes the amount of local tissue damage and swelling, which is the most common finding in pit viper bites.
• Go to the emergency room – the sooner the better.

Greene also dispels several myths about treating snake bites and suggests heeding the following advice:
• Do not apply a tourniquet or a constriction band.
• Do not apply ice; it can cause local tissue damage.
• Do not apply heat.
• Don’t cut the affected area and attempt to suck the venom out – this increases the amount of local tissue damage.
• Don’t use a commercially-available extraction device. These have also shown to be ineffective in removing venom and actually increase the amount of tissue damage.
• Don’t use electrical therapy.
• Don’t apply any type of lotions or ointments.

The management of snake bites has changed over the years and the newer type of anti-venom has proven to be very effective in reducing pain, bleeding complications, swelling and tissue damage, Greene says. Although anti-venom has been shown to have the maximum effectiveness within the first 12 hours of the bite, it can still be effective a few days after the bite.

At the hospital, physicians will determine if anti-venom and hospital admission is necessary.

“Ideally, patients should be evaluated by a medical toxicologist with experience in managing snake bites,” Greene says.

If a patient requires anti-venom, he or she usually spends one or two days in the hospital. After hospital discharge, patients will need to follow up twice a week for two weeks to watch for any signs of recurrent toxicity.
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Deputy Voter Registrar Training Available
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The Cypress-Tomball Democrats will offer Deputy Voter Registrar training during their Tuesday, May 21st meeting. It will be held at Rudy’s Grill & Cantina, 11760 Grant Rd., Cypress, TX 77429, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Xavier Herrera, Manager of Outreach from the Harris County Tax Office, will conduct training for anyone interested in becoming a Volunteer Deputy Voter Registrar.

All are welcome to attend and to join this growing club, which meets on the third Tuesday of every month. For more information, visit the website at www.cytomdems.com or contact Glenn Etienne at cytomdems@yahoo.com.

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Tribune - May 2013
Controlling weight can help a person reduce the risk of cancer, said an oncologist from the NCI-designated Dan L. Duncan Cancer Center at Baylor College of Medicine.

"We do not know exactly how and why obesity affects cancer risk, but we know there is an increase, so it is important for everyone to control their weight to minimize this risk," said Dr. Kent Osborne, director of the Duncan Cancer Center and the Lester and Sue Smith Breast Center, both at BCM.

Research has linked obesity to a greater risk of developing esophageal, pancreatic, colorectal, breast, endometrial, kidney, thyroid and gallbladder cancer, Osborne said.

In some cancers like breast cancer, there is also an increase in the risk of recurrence if a patient already has the cancer and is obese. Many other factors, such as genetics, may play a role in cancer development, but keeping a normal weight is one thing people can change and it may help, he said.
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** NORTHWEST HARRIS COUNTY AGGIE MOM’S CLUB **

NORTHWEST HARRIS COUNTY AGGIE MOM’S CLUB

nwhcaggiemoms.org

Calling all Aggie Moms! Please join us Tuesday, May 14, 2013, at 7 pm. We meet at the Houston Distributing Center conveniently located where Cutten meets SH 249 at the corner of Cutten Road and 7100 High Life Drive.

All meetings are open to Aggies, future, present or past. We provide light refreshments and you can shop our Boutique for that one-of-a-kind Aggie treasure. Our hand crafted items celebrate the heart warming TAMU traditions.

TAMU President Loftin was our March speaker. Next year November, Brigadier Joe Ramirez, Commandant of the Corp of Cadets will offer his help to students wanting to attend TAMU through this prestigious program.

New Aggie Mom? Are you sending off your first to Aggieland? Find out how we help your student succeed that first year at one of our informal Summer Mixers. Dates and locations on our website at www.nwhcaggiemoms.org.

Aggie Moms, as an organization, encourages parents to become familiar with A&M during their student’s freshman year instead of waiting for graduation to visit as is the custom on other university campuses. The path to graduation can be a challenging journey; don’t go it alone. Northwest Harris County Aggie Moms has been here for 25 years and we’re committed to helping your student and YOU enjoy the TAMU experience.

The Northwest Harris County Aggie Mom’s Club meets the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. (August-May), at the Houston Distributing Company, 7100 High Life Drive and Cutten Road. Drop on by and say Howdy. We’ll be darn glad you did! Feel free to contact Tish Otten, Club President at clubpres20122@gmail.com.

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